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AMCONGEN SYDNEY FOR A/S HILL, CHRISTOPHER KLEIN

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SUBJECT: NATIONAL SECURITY ADVISOR ON ROK-DPRK SUMMIT AND  
DENUCLEARIZATION

Classified By: AMB Alexander Vershbow. Reasons 1.4 (b/d)

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SUMMARY  
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¶1. (C) During a September 3 meeting with the Ambassador, National Security Advisor Baek Jong-chun, who will accompany President Roh Moo-hyun to the APEC meetings, said that the October 2-4 North-South summit would support the Six-Party Talks and denuclearization, but he was not confident that Kim Jong-il could be persuaded to voice explicit support for denuclearization or include a reference to it in a joint statement. Aware of U.S. concerns about undercutting the Six-Party Talks, the ROKG would not consider promising competing energy assistance to the North. Referring to the planned September 7 meeting between POTUS and President Roh Moo-hyun, Baek said that Roh would be looking for a positive message on U.S. readiness to normalize relations with the DPRK in the context of denuclearization, and would pass on that kind of message directly to Kim Jong-il. Roh would also appreciate a word of support for the ROK-DPRK summit. End Summary.

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ROKG-DPRK SUMMIT  
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¶2. (C) NSA Baek assured the Ambassador that the ROKG understood Washington's concerns about the planned October 2-4 ROK-DPRK summit and would keep in mind the principle that North-South relations must move in parallel with progress in the Six-Party Talks. The summit would bring "no negative impact on the Six-Party Talks or U.S.-ROK relations." Nor was the ROKG considering offering energy aid to the North that would interfere with Six-Party Talks plans. The Ambassador thanked Baek for those assurances and said that the world would be watching the summit with great interest.

¶3. (C) As for what President Roh hoped to accomplish in meeting with Kim Jong-il, Baek said that the ROKG saw the DPRK as having a "changed attitude" toward readiness to denuclearize. The nuclear issue would not be resolved overnight, but the ROKG wanted to try for progress in inter-Korean relations at the same time. It would likely take

30-40 years to develop the inter-Korean economic community that Roh had mentioned in his August 15 speech, but the summit would be a chance for the two leaders to discuss a vision for such joint development.

14. (C) The ROKG was trying to craft a package that would include denuclearization, economic cooperation, and military tension reduction, Baek said. Currently, there were legal and structural obstacles on both sides limiting the ability of ROK businesses to invest in North Korea, or to make money if they did. The leaders could talk about removing such obstacles. In addition, the South was interested in making the Kaesong Industrial Complex, now home to labor-intensive factories, more technology intensive; Baek noted that this change would require USG export approval of more advanced computers. Railroad connections were another area for potential discussion, but the North would have to be willing to offer a security guarantee. Asked whether the summit could lead to increased exchanges, such as between South and North Korean students and/or faculty, Baek said that the ROKG favored such exchanges, but that he would be surprised if Kim Jong-il were to agree. "We have to teach and push them," Baek said in English (otherwise speaking Korean).

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DENUCLEARIZATION PROSPECTS  
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15. (C) Baek underlined the value of President Bush's August 30 statement that the USG was prepared to normalize relations with a denuclearized North Korea, saying that many years of watching the DPRK had persuaded him that the DPRK was willing to change if the U.S. changed what the DPRK regarded as its hostile policy. The ROKG saw a "change in attitude" in the DPRK toward acceptance of denuclearization. However, full

resolution of the issue, especially persuading the North to give up its nuclear weapons, would take time. The Ambassador said that the DPRK needed to understand that the USG would insist on full denuclearization if normalization of relations were to occur; there was no "Indian" option whereby the DPRK could achieve normalization and a peace regime while keeping even a small number of nuclear weapons. We hope President Roh can get through to Kim Jong-Il that he has a window of opportunity for a fundamental change in relations with the United States, but full denuclearization was the key.

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ROKG IN IRAQ AND AFGHANISTAN  
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16. (C) The Ambassador asked Baek about the prospects for ROK engagement in Iraq and Afghanistan in the wake of the hostage crisis. On ROK troops in Iraq, Baek said that the ROKG was supposed to report to the National Assembly by the end of September on progress, and was supposed to withdraw all of its troops by the end of 2007. However, the ROKG was still "thinking about various ways to continue" its presence in Iraq into 2008. The Ambassador stressed that ROKG efforts in Irbil had been very productive and were a success story worth continuing.

17. (C) On Afghanistan, Baek noted that troops would be withdrawn by the end of the year (he did not mention any accelerated schedule of withdrawals) but that the ROKG was still seeking ways to cooperate with the U.S., and was continuing to talk about a Provincial Reconstruction Team (PRT). Secretary to the President for National Security Park Sun-won said that, in the wake of the hostage crisis, the ROKG believed that an ROKG PRT presence would require ROKG troops for protection, implying that this would be difficult.

VERSHBOW